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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of : Confirmation No. 5270
Takanori SHINOKI et al. : Docket No. 2000_0465A
Serial No. 09/529,255 : Group Art Unit 1771
Filed April 11, 2000 : Examiner Jennifer A. Boyd

SUPPORT MEMBER FOR SEMIPERMEABLE
MEMBRANE

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

THE COMMISSIONER IS AUTHORIZED
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ACCOUNT NO. 23-0975

Sir:

Reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Initially, Applicants acknowledge with thanks the Examiner's withdrawal of the former grounds of rejection of the claims under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, and the former grounds of rejection under 35 USC 103 over Pall and Shinjou et al.

The new ground of rejection of claims 9-11 and 17-18 under 35 USC 103 as unpatentable over Goettmann (U.S. 5,851,355) is also untenable and is respectfully traversed.

Initially, Applicants wish to make some comments on the field of this invention.

(1) Reverse osmosis membrane filtration and its market

(i) Principle of reverse osmosis

Migration of a solvent (water) in a dilute solution into a concentrated solution when the dilute and concentrated solutions are in contact with each other separated by a semipermeable membrane is called "osmosis". The pressure generated between the solutions after the "osmosis" reaches equilibrium is called "osmotic pressure". On the other hand, when a pressure greater than the "osmotic pressure" is applied to the concentrated solution, the solvent (water) therein